

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 125

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0073

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: FRG REPORT OF

JUNE 10, 1974 BILATERAL WITH SOVIET REP. KHLESTOV

FOLLOWING IS REPORT DISTRIBUTED TO AD HOC GROUP BY

FRG REP (BEHREND) OF JUNE 10, 1974 BILATERA

WITH SOVIET REP KHLESTOV.

BEGIN TEXT.

MR. CHLESTOW (GERMAN SPELLING OF KHLESTOV) INVITED MR. BEHRENN TO
LUNCH ON JUNE 10. MAIN POINTS OF CONVERSATION WERE:

1) MR. CHLESTOW ASKED MR. BEHREND TO COMMENT ON RECENT
PRESS INTERVIEW OF THE FEDERAL MINISTER OF DEFENCE.

IN THIS CONNECTION MR. BEHREND POINTED OUT THAT THE
EASTERN HABIT TO QUOTE IN PLENARY STATEMENTS PUBLIC
PRONOUNCEMENTS BY NATO POLITICAL LEADERS AND TO CLAIM

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THESE PRONOUNCEMENTS SUPPORTED IN ONE WAY OR THE OTHER,

THE EASTERN NEGOTIATING POSITION WAS MOST UNPRODUCTIVE. THE WESTERN DELEGATIONS COULD RETALIATE AND FOR INSTANCE POINT OUT THAT THE EASTERN CONTENTION THAT THERE WAS ALREADY A BALANCED RELATIONSHIP OF FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE WAS NOT SUPPORTED BY ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT OF WP POLITICAL AND MILITARY LEADERS. ON THE CONTRARY THERE WERE A NUMBER OF SUCH STATEMENTS CLAIMING THAT THE WP FORCES WERE SUPERIOR IN STRENGTH AND THAT THIS SUPERIORITY HAD TO BE MAINTAINED. MR. CHLESTOW REACTED TO THIS WITH A SMILE AND REPLIED THAT THESE WERE JUST ARGUMENTS FOR ARGUMENTS' SAKE; HE WAS AWARE THAT QUOTATIONS WOULD NOT CAUSE THE NATO COUNTRIES TO CHANGE THEIR POSITION.

2) MR. CHLESTOW ARGUED THAT THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO NEGOTIATING POSITIONS MADE IT ALL THE MORE NECESSARY TO SEARCH FOR WAYS AND MEANS TO MAKE PROGRESS. IN THIS CONNECTION HE ASKED WHETHER AN INITIAL REDUCTION OF STATIONED FORCES ONLY WOULD BE A CONCEPT WHICH MIGHT BE PROMISING AND WORTH EXPLORING. HE ALSO ASKED WHETHER A PHASED IMPLEMENTATION OF REDUCTIONS WOULD MEET SOME OF THE NATO COUNTRIES' CONCERNS. HE STRESSED THAT HE ASKED THESE QUESTIONS ONLY TO UNDERSTAND BETTER THE VIEWS OF THE NATO SIDE. MR. BEHREND REPLIED THAT BOTH CONCEPTS WERE NOT HELPFUL AND EXPLAINED THE REASONS WHY THE NATO COUNTRIES WOULD NOT ACCEPT THEM.

3) MR. CHLESTOW EXPLAINED THAT MOSCOW CONSIDERED UNEQUAL REDUCTIONS AS VIOLATING THE PRINCIPLE OF UNDIMINISHED SECURITY. IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT THIS POSITION WOULD EVER CHANGE. THE WESTERN PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A COMMON CEILING OF GROUND FORCES OF 700,000 ON EACH SIDE WAS A VERY OBVIOUS ATTEMPT TO CHANGE THE BALANCE OF FORCES IN FAVOUR OF NATO WITH A MINIMUM OF REDUCTIONS ON THE WESTERN SIDE. IF NATO HAD SUGGESTED REDUCTIONS TO A COMMON CEILING OF, LET'S SAY, 500,000 ON EACH SIDE, THE COMMON CEILING PROPOSAL WOULD MAKE MORE SENSE.

4) MR. CHLESTOW PLEADED FOR HIS PROPOSAL OF A FIRST STEP OF SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS. HE STRESSED THAT SUCH A FIRST STEP COULD BE LIMITED TO PERSONNEL AND WOULD NOT

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NECESSARILY HAVE TO INCLUDE ARMAMENTS. IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT EACH SIDE WISHED TO KEEP OPEN THE POSSIBILITY TO IMPROVE AND MODERNIZE ITS EQUIPMENT. THIS WAS ALSO THE LOGIC OF THE WESTERN NO-INCREASE PROPOSAL WHICH WAS ALSO LIMITED TO PERSONNEL. HE WAS AWARE THAT THE US AND IN PARTICULAR THE US SENATE BELIEVE THAT THE EUROPEANS SHOULD CONTRIBUTE A BIGGER SHARE TO THE COMMON DEFENCE EFFORT OF NATO. IF REDUCTIONS WERE INITIALLY LIMITED TO PERSONNEL

AND WOULD NOT INHIBIT THE IMPROVEMENT OF EQUIPMENT, THE EUROPEANS SHOULD BE ABLE TO SELL THIS TO THE AMERICANS. WHEN MR. BEHREND'S POINTED OUT THAT THE EASTERN DRAFT AGREEMENT PROPOSED THE INCLUSION OF ALL ARMAMENTS IN REDUCTIONS, MR. CHLESTOW SAID THAT EVEN FOR THE NEXT STEP OF REDUCTIONS AFTER THE INITIAL SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS ONE WOULD DISCUSS WHETHER A LIMITATION TO PERSONNEL WOULD BE FEASIBLE.

5) MR. BEHREND'S POINTED OUT THE DISPARITY IN MAIN BATTLE TANKS AND STRESSED THE NEED TO REDUCE THAT DISPARITY. MR. CHLESTOW REPLIED THAT THIS DISPARITY WAS LARGELY ARTIFICIAL. HE HAD NOTED WITH INTEREST THE STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR RESOR THAT TANKS IN STORAGE WERE NOT COUNTED IN THE FIGURES FOR NATO TANKS MENTIONED BY WESTERN PARTICIPANTS. MR. BEHREND'S POINTED OUT THAT THE FIGURE FOR WP TANKS INTRODUCED BY THE WESTERN DELEGATIONS ALSO DID NOT INCLUDE TANKS IN STORAGE. MR. CHLESTOW REPLIED THAT ON THE WP SIDE THERE WERE NO TANKS IN STORAGE. IF NEW TYPES OF TANKS WERE INTRODUCED INTO WP FORCES THEY REPLACED OLDER TYPES OF TANKS WHICH WERE KEPT WITH FORCES ONLY A SHORT TIME AND WERE THEN REMOVED FROM THE INVENTORY. BESIDES, IT WAS NECESSARY TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE SUBSTANTIAL ANTI-TANK CAPABILITY OF NATO SUCH AS FOR INSTANCE HELICOPTERS EQUIPPED WITH ANTI-TANK WEAPONS. IN THE LAST MIDDLE EAST WAR WESTERN ANTI-TANK WEAPONS HAD PROVED TO BE MOST EFFECTIVE. THE ISRAELIS HAD DESTROYED 1,200 TANKS.

6) MR. BEHREND'S POINTED OUT THAT SINCE THE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS AFTER THE EASTER RECESS, MR. CHLESTOW, IN EXPLAINING HIS PROPOSAL OF A FIRST SYMBOLIC STEP OF
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REDUCTIONS, HAD NEVER MADE THE POINT THAT THESE SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS WOULD ESTABLISH ONLY GLOBAL CEILINGS AND NOT NATIONAL CEILINGS. HAD THE EASTERN POSITION CHANGED IN THIS RESPECT? MR. CHLESTOW REPLIED SOMEWHAT EVASIVELY THAT THIS WAS NO PROPOSAL BUT A PERSONAL IDEA FLOATED BY HIM. THIS IDEA HAD NOT CHANGED. THE EASTERN POSITION AIMED AT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL CEILINGS. HE WAS, HOWEVER, AWARE THAT IN A FIRST SYMBOLIC REDUCTION AGREEMENT NOT ALL EASTERN OBJECTIVES COULD BE REALIZED AND COMPROMISES HAD TO BE MADE.

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FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 126

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO USMISSION NATO

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0073

FROM US REP MBFR

7. MR BEHREND'S REFERRED TO REMARK CONCERNING THE POSSIBILITY OF UNILATERAL STATEMENTS ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN CONNECTION WITH A SYMBOLIC REDUCTION AGREEMENT, WHICH MR CHLESTOW HAD MADE IN AN INFORMAL MEETING BEFORE EASTER. WHAT WAS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THAT RATHER CRYPTIC REMARK? MR CHLESTOW REPLIED THAT THIS REMARK HAD BEEN OF A PERSONAL CHARACTER. IT WAS ALSO BASED ON THE RECOGNITION THAT FOR A FIRST STEP OF REDUCTIONS COMPROMISES HAD TO BE MADE. IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO DEAL WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN A SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS AGREEMENT IN A WAY WHICH WOULD MAKE CERTAIN THAT THEY WOULD BE INCLUDED IN A SUBSEQUENT NEXT STEP OF REDUCTIONS. IN GIVING THIS REPLY, MR CHLESTOW SEEMED TO BE ILL AT EASE AND EAGER TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT.

8. MR BEHREND'S EXPLAINED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WESTERN NO-INCREASE OFFER AND STATED THAT WITH THIS OFFER THE NATO COUNTRIES HAD MOVED TO A MIDDLE POSITION BETWEEN REDUCTIONS OF ALL FROM THE OUTSET AND THE ORIGINAL PHASED APPROACH.

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THERE HAD BEEN NO CORRESPONDING FLEXIBILITY ON THE EASTERN SIDE. MR CHLESTOW SAID THAT THE NO-INCREASE OFFER, JUST LIKE THE OFFER OF A REVIEW-CLAUSE, WAS OF LITTLE INTEREST TO THE EAST. THE EAST WAS NOT INTERESTED IN A PHASE I-AGREEMENT WHICH AFTER A FEW YEARS COULD BE TERMINATED. THE GREATEST WEAKNESS OF THE WESTERN PHASED APPROACH WAS THAT BOTH THE CONTENTS AND THE TIMING OF THE SECOND PHASE REMAINED COMPLETELY VAGUE. THE WESTERN PROPOSAL DID NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THERE WOULD BE A PHASE II IN 10 OR 20 YEARS. HE WAS AWARE THAT THE EASTERN DRAFT AGREEMENT WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE WEST. NEITHER WAS THE NATO OUTLINE OF PROPOSAL ACCEPTABLE TO THE EAST. IT WAS THEREFORE NECESSARY TO LOOK FOR NEW WAYS. THE WESTERN METHOD OF OFFERING SMALL CONCESSIONS BUT OF MAKING THEM DEPEND ON THE EAST ACCEPTING ALL THE OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE WESTERN NEGOTIATING PACKAGE MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS. HOW COULD EVEN A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT ON WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FIRST BE REACHED AS LONG AS ALL OTHER ELEMENTS OF A REDUCTION AGREEMENT REMAINED COMPLETELY UNCLEAR.

9. MR CHLESTOW SAID THAT THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM WISHED TO REDUCE THEIR FORCES. THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAD NOT INDICATED ANY DESIRE TO REDUCE. MR BEHREND'S POINTED OUT THE NEED TO CREATE THE NECESSARY CONFIDENCE THROUGH REDUCTIONS OF US AND SOVIET GROUND FORCES IN A FIRST PHASE. MR CHLESTOW REPLIED THAT THE BUNDESWEHR WAS PLANNING ANYWAY TO TRANSFER 30,000 MEN FROM ACTIVE SERVICE TO A RESERVE STATUS. IT SHOULD THEREFORE NOT BE DIFFICULT FOR THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC TO COMMIT ITSELF TO REDUCE A FEW THOUSAND MEN.

10. MR CHLESTOW SHOWED INTEREST IN THE ATTITUDE OF THE NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT TO MBFR. HE EXPRESSED HIS PERSONAL OPINION THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WAS UNLIKELY TO AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MBFR-NEGOTIATIONS.
END TEXT.RESOR

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